

# *The Jungle*

By

Upton Sinclair

## Chapter 25

Jurgis got up, wild with rage, but the door was shut and the great castle was dark and impregnable. Then the icy teeth of the blast bit into him, and he turned and went away at a run.

When he stopped again it was because he was coming to frequented streets and did not wish to attract attention. In spite of that last humiliation, his heart was thumping fast with triumph. He had come out ahead on that deal! He put his hand into his trousers' pocket every now and then, to make sure that the precious hundred-dollar bill was still there.

Yet he was in a plight—a curious and even dreadful plight, when he came to realize it. He had not a single cent but that one bill! And he had to find some shelter that night he had to change it!

Jurgis spent half an hour walking and debating the problem. There was no one he could go to for help—he had to manage it all alone. To get it changed in a lodging-house would be to take his life in his hands—he would almost certainly be robbed, and perhaps murdered, before morning. He might go to some hotel or railroad depot and ask to have it changed; but what would they think, seeing a “bum” like him with a hundred dollars? He would probably be arrested if he tried it; and what story could he tell? On the morrow Freddie Jones would discover his loss, and there would be a hunt for him, and he would lose his money.

The only other plan he could think of was to try in a saloon. He might pay them to change it, if it could not be done otherwise.

He began peering into places as he walked; he passed several as being too crowded—then finally, chancing upon one where the bartender was all alone, he gripped his hands in sudden resolution and went in.

“Can you change me a hundred-dollar bill?” he demanded.

The bartender was a big, husky fellow, with the jaw of a prize fighter, and a three weeks’ stubble of hair upon it. He stared at Jurgis. “What’s that youse say?” he demanded.

“I said, could you change me a hundred-dollar bill?”

“Where’d youse get it?” he inquired incredulously.

“Never mind,” said Jurgis; “I’ve got it, and I want it changed. I’ll pay you if you’ll do it.”

The other stared at him hard. “Lemme see it,” he said.

“Will you change it?” Jurgis demanded, gripping it tightly in his pocket.

“How the hell can I know if it’s good or not?” retorted the bartender.

“Whatcher take me for, hey?”

Then Jurgis slowly and warily approached him; he took out the bill, and fumbled it for a moment, while the man stared at him with hostile eyes across the counter. Then finally he handed it over.

The other took it, and began to examine it; he smoothed it between his fingers, and held it up to the light; he turned it over, and upside down,

and edgeways. It was new and rather stiff, and that made him dubious. Jurgis was watching him like a cat all the time.

“Humph,” he said, finally, and gazed at the stranger, sizing him up—a ragged, ill-smelling tramp, with no overcoat and one arm in a sling—and a hundred-dollar bill! “Want to buy anything?” he demanded.

“Yes,” said Jurgis, “I’ll take a glass of beer.”

“All right,” said the other, “I’ll change it.” And he put the bill in his pocket, and poured Jurgis out a glass of beer, and set it on the counter. Then he turned to the cash register, and punched up five cents, and began to pull money out of the drawer. Finally, he faced Jurgis, counting it out—two dimes, a quarter, and fifty cents. “There,” he said.

For a second Jurgis waited, expecting to see him turn again. “My ninety-nine dollars,” he said.

“What ninety-nine dollars?” demanded the bartender.

“My change!” he cried—“the rest of my hundred!”

“Go on,” said the bartender, “you’re nutty!”

And Jurgis stared at him with wild eyes. For an instant horror reigned in him—black, paralyzing, awful horror, clutching him at the heart; and then came rage, in surging, blinding floods—he screamed aloud, and seized the glass and hurled it at the other’s head. The man ducked, and it missed him by half an inch; he rose again and faced Jurgis, who was vaulting over the bar with his one well arm, and dealt him a smashing blow in the face, hurling him backward upon the floor. Then, as Jurgis scrambled to his feet again and started round the counter after him, he shouted at the top of his voice, “Help! help!”

Jurgis seized a bottle off the counter as he ran; and as the bartender made a leap he hurled the missile at him with all his force. It just grazed his head, and shivered into a thousand pieces against the post of the door. Then Jurgis started back, rushing at the man again in the middle of the room. This time, in his blind frenzy, he came without a bottle, and that was all the bartender wanted—he met him halfway and floored him with a sledgehammer drive between the eyes. An instant later the screen doors flew open, and two men rushed in—just as Jurgis was getting to his feet again, foaming at the mouth with rage, and trying to tear his broken arm out of its bandages.

“Look out!” shouted the bartender. “He’s got a knife!” Then, seeing that the two were disposed to join the fray, he made another rush at Jurgis, and knocked aside his feeble defense and sent him tumbling again; and the three flung themselves upon him, rolling and kicking about the place.

A second later a policeman dashed in, and the bartender yelled once more—”Look out for his knife!” Jurgis had fought himself half to his knees, when the policeman made a leap at him, and cracked him across the face with his club. Though the blow staggered him, the wild-beast frenzy still blazed in him, and he got to his feet, lunging into the air. Then again the club descended, full upon his head, and he dropped like a log to the floor.

The policeman crouched over him, clutching his stick, waiting for him to try to rise again; and meantime the barkeeper got up, and put his hand to his head. “Christ!” he said, “I thought I was done for that time. Did he cut me?”

“Don’t see anything, Jake,” said the policeman. “What’s the matter with him?”

“Just crazy drunk,” said the other. “A lame duck, too—but he ‘most got me under the bar. Youse had better call the wagon, Billy.”

“No,” said the officer. “He’s got no more fight in him, I guess—and he’s only got a block to go.” He twisted his hand in Jurgis’s collar and jerked at him. “Git up here, you!” he commanded.

But Jurgis did not move, and the bartender went behind the bar, and after stowing the hundred-dollar bill away in a safe hiding place, came and poured a glass of water over Jurgis. Then, as the latter began to moan feebly, the policeman got him to his feet and dragged him out of the place. The station house was just around the corner, and so in a few minutes Jurgis was in a cell.

He spent half the night lying unconscious, and the balance moaning in torment, with a blinding headache and a racking thirst. Now and then he cried aloud for a drink of water, but there was no one to hear him. There were others in that same station house with split heads and a fever; there were hundreds of them in the great city, and tens of thousands of them in the great land, and there was no one to hear any of them.

In the morning Jurgis was given a cup of water and a piece of bread, and then hustled into a patrol wagon and driven to the nearest police court. He sat in the pen with a score of others until his turn came.

The bartender—who proved to be a well-known bruiser—was called to the stand. He took the oath and told his story. The prisoner had come into his saloon after midnight, fighting drunk, and had ordered a glass of beer and tendered a dollar bill in payment. He had been given ninety-five cents’ change, and had demanded ninety-nine dollars more, and before the plaintiff could even answer had hurled the glass at him and then attacked him with a bottle of bitters, and nearly wrecked the place.

Then the prisoner was sworn—a forlorn object, haggard and unshorn, with an arm done up in a filthy bandage, a cheek and head cut, and

bloody, and one eye purplish black and entirely closed. “What have you to say for yourself?” queried the magistrate.

“Your Honor,” said Jurgis, “I went into his place and asked the man if he could change me a hundred-dollar bill. And he said he would if I bought a drink. I gave him the bill and then he wouldn’t give me the change.”

The magistrate was staring at him in perplexity. “You gave him a hundred-dollar bill!” he exclaimed.

“Yes, your Honor,” said Jurgis.

“Where did you get it?”

“A man gave it to me, your Honor.”

“A man? What man, and what for?”

“A young man I met upon the street, your Honor. I had been begging.”

There was a titter in the courtroom; the officer who was holding Jurgis put up his hand to hide a smile, and the magistrate smiled without trying to hide it. “It’s true, your Honor!” cried Jurgis, passionately.

“You had been drinking as well as begging last night, had you not?” inquired the magistrate. “No, your Honor—” protested Jurgis. “I—”

“You had not had anything to drink?”

“Why, yes, your Honor, I had—”

“What did you have?”

“I had a bottle of something—I don’t know what it was—something that burned—”

There was again a laugh round the courtroom, stopping suddenly as the magistrate looked up and frowned. “Have you ever been arrested before?” he asked abruptly.

The question took Jurgis aback. “I—I—” he stammered.

“Tell me the truth, now!” commanded the other, sternly.

“Yes, your Honor,” said Jurgis.

“How often?”

“Only once, your Honor.”

“What for?”

“For knocking down my boss, your Honor. I was working in the stockyards, and he—”

“I see,” said his Honor; “I guess that will do. You ought to stop drinking if you can’t control yourself. Ten days and costs. Next case.”

Jurgis gave vent to a cry of dismay, cut off suddenly by the policeman, who seized him by the collar. He was jerked out of the way, into a room with the convicted prisoners, where he sat and wept like a child in his impotent rage. It seemed monstrous to him that policemen and judges should esteem his word as nothing in comparison with the bartender’s—poor Jurgis could not know that the owner of the saloon paid five dollars each week to the policeman alone for Sunday privileges and general favors—nor that the pugilist bartender was one of the most trusted henchmen of the Democratic leader of the district, and had helped only a

few months before to hustle out a record-breaking vote as a testimonial to the magistrate, who had been made the target of odious kid-gloved reformers.

Jurgis was driven out to the Bridewell for the second time. In his tumbling around he had hurt his arm again, and so could not work, but had to be attended by the physician. Also his head and his eye had to be tied up—and so he was a pretty-looking object when, the second day after his arrival, he went out into the exercise court and encountered—Jack Duane!

The young fellow was so glad to see Jurgis that he almost hugged him. “By God, if it isn’t ‘the Stinker’!” he cried. “And what is it—have you been through a sausage machine?”

“No,” said Jurgis, “but I’ve been in a railroad wreck and a fight.” And then, while some of the other prisoners gathered round he told his wild story; most of them were incredulous, but Duane knew that Jurgis could never have made up such a yarn as that.

“Hard luck, old man,” he said, when they were alone; “but maybe it’s taught you a lesson.”

“I’ve learned some things since I saw you last,” said Jurgis mournfully. Then he explained how he had spent the last summer, “hoboing it,” as the phrase was. “And you?” he asked finally. “Have you been here ever since?”

“Lord, no!” said the other. “I only came in the day before yesterday. It’s the second time they’ve sent me up on a trumped-up charge—I’ve had hard luck and can’t pay them what they want. Why don’t you quit Chicago with me, Jurgis?”

“I’ve no place to go,” said Jurgis, sadly.

“Neither have I,” replied the other, laughing lightly. “But we’ll wait till we get out and see.”

In the Bridewell Jurgis met few who had been there the last time, but he met scores of others, old and young, of exactly the same sort. It was like breakers upon a beach; there was new water, but the wave looked just the same. He strolled about and talked with them, and the biggest of them told tales of their prowess, while those who were weaker, or younger and inexperienced, gathered round and listened in admiring silence. The last time he was there, Jurgis had thought of little but his family; but now he was free to listen to these men, and to realize that he was one of them—that their point of view was his point of view, and that the way they kept themselves alive in the world was the way he meant to do it in the future.

And so, when he was turned out of prison again, without a penny in his pocket, he went straight to Jack Duane. He went full of humility and gratitude; for Duane was a gentleman, and a man with a profession—and it was remarkable that he should be willing to throw in his lot with a humble workingman, one who had even been a beggar and a tramp. Jurgis could not see what help he could be to him; but he did not understand that a man like himself—who could be trusted to stand by any one who was kind to him—was as rare among criminals as among any other class of men.

The address Jurgis had was a garret room in the Ghetto district, the home of a pretty little French girl, Duane’s mistress, who sewed all day, and eked out her living by prostitution. He had gone elsewhere, she told Jurgis—he was afraid to stay there now, on account of the police. The new address was a cellar dive, whose proprietor said that he had never heard of Duane; but after he had put Jurgis through a catechism he showed him a back stairs which led to a “fence” in the rear of a

pawnbroker's shop, and thence to a number of assignation rooms, in one of which Duane was hiding.

Duane was glad to see him; he was without a cent of money, he said, and had been waiting for Jurgis to help him get some. He explained his plan—in fact he spent the day in laying bare to his friend the criminal world of the city, and in showing him how he might earn himself a living in it. That winter he would have a hard time, on account of his arm, and because of an unwonted fit of activity of the police; but so long as he was unknown to them he would be safe if he were careful. Here at “Papa” Hanson’s (so they called the old man who kept the dive) he might rest at ease, for “Papa” Hanson was “square”—would stand by him so long as he paid, and gave him an hour’s notice if there were to be a police raid. Also Rosensteg, the pawnbroker, would buy anything he had for a third of its value, and guarantee to keep it hidden for a year.

There was an oil stove in the little cupboard of a room, and they had some supper; and then about eleven o’clock at night they sallied forth together, by a rear entrance to the place, Duane armed with a slingshot. They came to a residence district, and he sprang up a lamppost and blew out the light, and then the two dodged into the shelter of an area step and hid in silence.

Pretty soon a man came by, a workingman—and they let him go. Then after a long interval came the heavy tread of a policeman, and they held their breath till he was gone. Though half-frozen, they waited a full quarter of an hour after that—and then again came footsteps, walking briskly. Duane nudged Jurgis, and the instant the man had passed they rose up. Duane stole out as silently as a shadow, and a second later Jurgis heard a thud and a stifled cry. He was only a couple of feet behind, and he leaped to stop the man’s mouth, while Duane held him fast by the arms, as they had agreed. But the man was limp and showed a tendency to fall, and so Jurgis had only to hold him by the collar, while the other, with swift fingers, went through his pockets—ripping open,

first his overcoat, and then his coat, and then his vest, searching inside and outside, and transferring the contents into his own pockets. At last, after feeling of the man's fingers and in his necktie, Duane whispered, "That's all!" and they dragged him to the area and dropped him in. Then Jurgis went one way and his friend the other, walking briskly.

The latter arrived first, and Jurgis found him examining the "swag." There was a gold watch, for one thing, with a chain and locket; there was a silver pencil, and a matchbox, and a handful of small change, and finally a cardcase. This last Duane opened feverishly—there were letters and checks, and two theater-tickets, and at last, in the back part, a wad of bills. He counted them—there was a twenty, five tens, four fives, and three ones. Duane drew a long breath. "That lets us out!" he said.

After further examination, they burned the cardcase and its contents, all but the bills, and likewise the picture of a little girl in the locket. Then Duane took the watch and trinkets downstairs, and came back with sixteen dollars. "The old scoundrel said the case was filled," he said. "It's a lie, but he knows I want the money."

They divided up the spoils, and Jurgis got as his share fifty-five dollars and some change. He protested that it was too much, but the other had agreed to divide even. That was a good haul, he said, better than average.

When they got up in the morning, Jurgis was sent out to buy a paper; one of the pleasures of committing a crime was the reading about it afterward. "I had a pal that always did it," Duane remarked, laughing—"until one day he read that he had left three thousand dollars in a lower inside pocket of his party's vest!"

There was a half-column account of the robbery—it was evident that a gang was operating in the neighborhood, said the paper, for it was the third within a week, and the police were apparently powerless. The

victim was an insurance agent, and he had lost a hundred and ten dollars that did not belong to him. He had chanced to have his name marked on his shirt, otherwise he would not have been identified yet. His assailant had hit him too hard, and he was suffering from concussion of the brain; and also he had been half-frozen when found, and would lose three fingers on his right hand. The enterprising newspaper reporter had taken all this information to his family, and told how they had received it.

Since it was Jurgis's first experience, these details naturally caused him some worryment; but the other laughed coolly—it was the way of the game, and there was no helping it. Before long Jurgis would think no more of it than they did in the yards of knocking out a bullock. "It's a case of us or the other fellow, and I say the other fellow, every time," he observed.

"Still," said Jurgis, reflectively, "he never did us any harm."

"He was doing it to somebody as hard as he could, you can be sure of that," said his friend.

Duane had already explained to Jurgis that if a man of their trade were known he would have to work all the time to satisfy the demands of the police. Therefore it would be better for Jurgis to stay in hiding and never be seen in public with his pal. But Jurgis soon got very tired of staying in hiding. In a couple of weeks he was feeling strong and beginning to use his arm, and then he could not stand it any longer. Duane, who had done a job of some sort by himself, and made a truce with the powers, brought over Marie, his little French girl, to share with him; but even that did not avail for long, and in the end he had to give up arguing, and take Jurgis out and introduce him to the saloons and "sporting houses" where the big crooks and "holdup men" hung out.

And so Jurgis got a glimpse of the high-class criminal world of Chicago. The city, which was owned by an oligarchy of businessmen, being

nominally ruled by the people, a huge army of graft was necessary for the purpose of effecting the transfer of power. Twice a year, in the spring and fall elections, millions of dollars were furnished by the businessmen and expended by this army; meetings were held and clever speakers were hired, bands played and rockets sizzled, tons of documents and reservoirs of drinks were distributed, and tens of thousands of votes were bought for cash. And this army of graft had, of course, to be maintained the year round. The leaders and organizers were maintained by the businessmen directly—aldermen and legislators by means of bribes, party officials out of the campaign funds, lobbyists and corporation lawyers in the form of salaries, contractors by means of jobs, labor union leaders by subsidies, and newspaper proprietors and editors by advertisements. The rank and file, however, were either foisted upon the city, or else lived off the population directly. There was the police department, and the fire and water departments, and the whole balance of the civil list, from the meanest office boy to the head of a city department; and for the horde who could find no room in these, there was the world of vice and crime, there was license to seduce, to swindle and plunder and prey. The law forbade Sunday drinking; and this had delivered the saloon-keepers into the hands of the police, and made an alliance between them necessary. The law forbade prostitution; and this had brought the “madames” into the combination. It was the same with the gambling-house keeper and the poolroom man, and the same with any other man or woman who had a means of getting “graft,” and was willing to pay over a share of it: the green-goods man and the highwayman, the pickpocket and the sneak thief, and the receiver of stolen goods, the seller of adulterated milk, of stale fruit and diseased meat, the proprietor of unsanitary tenements, the fake doctor and the usurer, the beggar and the “pushcart man,” the prize fighter and the professional slugger, the race-track “tout,” the procurer, the white-slave agent, and the expert seducer of young girls. All of these agencies of corruption were banded together, and leagued in blood brotherhood with the politician and the police; more often than not they were one and the same person,—the police captain would own the brothel he pretended to

raid, the politician would open his headquarters in his saloon. “Hinkydink” or “Bathhouse John,” or others of that ilk, were proprietors of the most notorious dives in Chicago, and also the “gray wolves” of the city council, who gave away the streets of the city to the businessmen; and those who patronized their places were the gamblers and prize fighters who set the law at defiance, and the burglars and holdup men who kept the whole city in terror. On election day all these powers of vice and crime were one power; they could tell within one per cent what the vote of their district would be, and they could change it at an hour’s notice.

A month ago Jurgis had all but perished of starvation upon the streets; and now suddenly, as by the gift of a magic key, he had entered into a world where money and all the good things of life came freely. He was introduced by his friend to an Irishman named “Buck” Halloran, who was a political “worker” and on the inside of things. This man talked with Jurgis for a while, and then told him that he had a little plan by which a man who looked like a workingman might make some easy money; but it was a private affair, and had to be kept quiet. Jurgis expressed himself as agreeable, and the other took him that afternoon (it was Saturday) to a place where city laborers were being paid off. The paymaster sat in a little booth, with a pile of envelopes before him, and two policemen standing by. Jurgis went, according to directions, and gave the name of “Michael O’Flaherty,” and received an envelope, which he took around the corner and delivered to Halloran, who was waiting for him in a saloon. Then he went again; and gave the name of “Johann Schmidt,” and a third time, and give the name of “Serge Reminitsky.” Halloran had quite a list of imaginary workingmen, and Jurgis got an envelope for each one. For this work he received five dollars, and was told that he might have it every week, so long as he kept quiet. As Jurgis was excellent at keeping quiet, he soon won the trust of “Buck” Halloran, and was introduced to others as a man who could be depended upon.

This acquaintance was useful to him in another way, also before long Jurgis made his discovery of the meaning of “pull,” and just why his boss, Connor, and also the pugilist bartender, had been able to send him to jail. One night there was given a ball, the “benefit” of “One-eyed Larry,” a lame man who played the violin in one of the big “high-class” houses of prostitution on Clark Street, and was a wag and a popular character on the “Levee.” This ball was held in a big dance hall, and was one of the occasions when the city’s powers of debauchery gave themselves up to madness. Jurgis attended and got half insane with drink, and began quarreling over a girl; his arm was pretty strong by then, and he set to work to clean out the place, and ended in a cell in the police station. The police station being crowded to the doors, and stinking with “bums,” Jurgis did not relish staying there to sleep off his liquor, and sent for Halloran, who called up the district leader and had Jurgis bailed out by telephone at four o’clock in the morning. When he was arraigned that same morning, the district leader had already seen the clerk of the court and explained that Jurgis Rudkus was a decent fellow, who had been indiscreet; and so Jurgis was fined ten dollars and the fine was “suspended”—which meant that he did not have to pay for it, and never would have to pay it, unless somebody chose to bring it up against him in the future.

Among the people Jurgis lived with now money was valued according to an entirely different standard from that of the people of Packingtown; yet, strange as it may seem, he did a great deal less drinking than he had as a workingman. He had not the same provocations of exhaustion and hopelessness; he had now something to work for, to struggle for. He soon found that if he kept his wits about him, he would come upon new opportunities; and being naturally an active man, he not only kept sober himself, but helped to steady his friend, who was a good deal fonder of both wine and women than he.

One thing led to another. In the saloon where Jurgis met “Buck” Halloran he was sitting late one night with Duane, when a “country

customer” (a buyer for an out-of-town merchant) came in, a little more than half “piped.” There was no one else in the place but the bartender, and as the man went out again Jurgis and Duane followed him; he went round the corner, and in a dark place made by a combination of the elevated railroad and an unrented building, Jurgis leaped forward and shoved a revolver under his nose, while Duane, with his hat pulled over his eyes, went through the man’s pockets with lightning fingers. They got his watch and his “wad,” and were round the corner again and into the saloon before he could shout more than once. The bartender, to whom they had tipped the wink, had the cellar door open for them, and they vanished, making their way by a secret entrance to a brothel next door. From the roof of this there was access to three similar places beyond. By means of these passages the customers of any one place could be gotten out of the way, in case a falling out with the police chanced to lead to a raid; and also it was necessary to have a way of getting a girl out of reach in case of an emergency. Thousands of them came to Chicago answering advertisements for “servants” and “factory hands,” and found themselves trapped by fake employment agencies, and locked up in a bawdyhouse. It was generally enough to take all their clothes away from them; but sometimes they would have to be “doped” and kept prisoners for weeks; and meantime their parents might be telegraphing the police, and even coming on to see why nothing was done. Occasionally there was no way of satisfying them but to let them search the place to which the girl had been traced.

For his help in this little job, the bartender received twenty out of the hundred and thirty odd dollars that the pair secured; and naturally this put them on friendly terms with him, and a few days later he introduced them to a little “sheeny” named Goldberger, one of the “runners” of the “sporting house” where they had been hidden. After a few drinks Goldberger began, with some hesitation, to narrate how he had had a quarrel over his best girl with a professional “cardsharp,” who had hit him in the jaw. The fellow was a stranger in Chicago, and if he was found some night with his head cracked there would be no one to care

very much. Jurgis, who by this time would cheerfully have cracked the heads of all the gamblers in Chicago, inquired what would be coming to him; at which the Jew became still more confidential, and said that he had some tips on the New Orleans races, which he got direct from the police captain of the district, whom he had got out of a bad scrape, and who “stood in” with a big syndicate of horse owners. Duane took all this in at once, but Jurgis had to have the whole race-track situation explained to him before he realized the importance of such an opportunity.

There was the gigantic Racing Trust. It owned the legislatures in every state in which it did business; it even owned some of the big newspapers, and made public opinion—there was no power in the land that could oppose it unless, perhaps, it were the Poolroom Trust. It built magnificent racing parks all over the country, and by means of enormous purses it lured the people to come, and then it organized a gigantic shell game, whereby it plundered them of hundreds of millions of dollars every year. Horse racing had once been a sport, but nowadays it was a business; a horse could be “doped” and doctored, undertrained or overtrained; it could be made to fall at any moment—or its gait could be broken by lashing it with the whip, which all the spectators would take to be a desperate effort to keep it in the lead. There were scores of such tricks; and sometimes it was the owners who played them and made fortunes, sometimes it was the jockeys and trainers, sometimes it was outsiders, who bribed them—but most of the time it was the chiefs of the trust. Now for instance, they were having winter racing in New Orleans and a syndicate was laying out each day’s program in advance, and its agents in all the Northern cities were “milking” the poolrooms. The word came by long-distance telephone in a cipher code, just a little while before each race; and any man who could get the secret had as good as a fortune. If Jurgis did not believe it, he could try it, said the little Jew—let them meet at a certain house on the morrow and make a test. Jurgis was willing, and so was Duane, and so they went to one of the high-class poolrooms where brokers and merchants gambled (with society women

in a private room), and they put up ten dollars each upon a horse called “Black Beldame,” a six to one shot, and won. For a secret like that they would have done a good many sluggings—but the next day Goldberger informed them that the offending gambler had got wind of what was coming to him, and had skipped the town.

There were ups and downs at the business; but there was always a living, inside of a jail, if not out of it. Early in April the city elections were due, and that meant prosperity for all the powers of graft. Jurgis, hanging round in dives and gambling houses and brothels, met with the heelers of both parties, and from their conversation he came to understand all the ins and outs of the game, and to hear of a number of ways in which he could make himself useful about election time. “Buck” Halloran was a “Democrat,” and so Jurgis became a Democrat also; but he was not a bitter one—the Republicans were good fellows, too, and were to have a pile of money in this next campaign. At the last election the Republicans had paid four dollars a vote to the Democrats’ three; and “Buck” Halloran sat one night playing cards with Jurgis and another man, who told how Halloran had been charged with the job voting a “bunch” of thirty-seven newly landed Italians, and how he, the narrator, had met the Republican worker who was after the very same gang, and how the three had effected a bargain, whereby the Italians were to vote half and half, for a glass of beer apiece, while the balance of the fund went to the conspirators!

Not long after this, Jurgis, wearying of the risks and vicissitudes of miscellaneous crime, was moved to give up the career for that of a politician. Just at this time there was a tremendous uproar being raised concerning the alliance between the criminals and the police. For the criminal graft was one in which the businessmen had no direct part—it was what is called a “side line,” carried by the police. “Wide open” gambling and debauchery made the city pleasing to “trade,” but burglaries and holdups did not. One night it chanced that while Jack Duane was drilling a safe in a clothing store he was caught red-handed

by the night watchman, and turned over to a policeman, who chanced to know him well, and who took the responsibility of letting him make his escape. Such a howl from the newspapers followed this that Duane was slated for sacrifice, and barely got out of town in time. And just at that juncture it happened that Jurgis was introduced to a man named Harper whom he recognized as the night watchman at Brown's, who had been instrumental in making him an American citizen, the first year of his arrival at the yards. The other was interested in the coincidence, but did not remember Jurgis—he had handled too many “green ones” in his time, he said. He sat in a dance hall with Jurgis and Halloran until one or two in the morning, exchanging experiences. He had a long story to tell of his quarrel with the superintendent of his department, and how he was now a plain workingman, and a good union man as well. It was not until some months afterward that Jurgis understood that the quarrel with the superintendent had been prearranged, and that Harper was in reality drawing a salary of twenty dollars a week from the packers for an inside report of his union's secret proceedings. The yards were seething with agitation just then, said the man, speaking as a unionist. The people of Packingtown had borne about all that they would bear, and it looked as if a strike might begin any week.

After this talk the man made inquiries concerning Jurgis, and a couple of days later he came to him with an interesting proposition. He was not absolutely certain, he said, but he thought that he could get him a regular salary if he would come to Packingtown and do as he was told, and keep his mouth shut. Harper—“Bush” Harper, he was called—was a right-hand man of Mike Scully, the Democratic boss of the stockyards; and in the coming election there was a peculiar situation. There had come to Scully a proposition to nominate a certain rich brewer who lived upon a swell boulevard that skirted the district, and who coveted the big badge and the “honorable” of an alderman. The brewer was a Jew, and had no brains, but he was harmless, and would put up a rare campaign fund. Scully had accepted the offer, and then gone to the Republicans with a proposition. He was not sure that he could manage the “sheeny,” and he

did not mean to take any chances with his district; let the Republicans nominate a certain obscure but amiable friend of Scully's, who was now setting tenpins in the cellar of an Ashland Avenue saloon, and he, Scully, would elect him with the "sheeny's" money, and the Republicans might have the glory, which was more than they would get otherwise. In return for this the Republicans would agree to put up no candidate the following year, when Scully himself came up for reelection as the other alderman from the ward. To this the Republicans had assented at once; but the hell of it was—so Harper explained—that the Republicans were all of them fools—a man had to be a fool to be a Republican in the stockyards, where Scully was king. And they didn't know how to work, and of course it would not do for the Democratic workers, the noble redskins of the War Whoop League, to support the Republican openly. The difficulty would not have been so great except for another fact—there had been a curious development in stockyards politics in the last year or two, a new party having leaped into being. They were the Socialists; and it was a devil of a mess, said "Bush" Harper. The one image which the word "Socialist" brought to Jurgis was of poor little Tamoszius Kuszleika, who had called himself one, and would go out with a couple of other men and a soap-box, and shout himself hoarse on a street corner Saturday nights. Tamoszius had tried to explain to Jurgis what it was all about, but Jurgis, who was not of an imaginative turn, had never quite got it straight; at present he was content with his companion's explanation that the Socialists were the enemies of American institutions—could not be bought, and would not combine or make any sort of a "dicker." Mike Scully was very much worried over the opportunity which his last deal gave to them—the stockyards Democrats were furious at the idea of a rich capitalist for their candidate, and while they were changing they might possibly conclude that a Socialist firebrand was preferable to a Republican bum. And so right here was a chance for Jurgis to make himself a place in the world, explained "Bush" Harper; he had been a union man, and he was known in the yards as a workingman; he must have hundreds of acquaintances, and as he had never talked politics with them he might come out as a

Republican now without exciting the least suspicion. There were barrels of money for the use of those who could deliver the goods; and Jurgis might count upon Mike Scully, who had never yet gone back on a friend. Just what could he do? Jurgis asked, in some perplexity, and the other explained in detail. To begin with, he would have to go to the yards and work, and he mightn't relish that; but he would have what he earned, as well as the rest that came to him. He would get active in the union again, and perhaps try to get an office, as he, Harper, had; he would tell all his friends the good points of Doyle, the Republican nominee, and the bad ones of the "sheeny"; and then Scully would furnish a meeting place, and he would start the "Young Men's Republican Association," or something of that sort, and have the rich brewer's best beer by the hogshead, and fireworks and speeches, just like the War Whoop League. Surely Jurgis must know hundreds of men who would like that sort of fun; and there would be the regular Republican leaders and workers to help him out, and they would deliver a big enough majority on election day.

When he had heard all this explanation to the end, Jurgis demanded: "But how can I get a job in Packingtown? I'm blacklisted."

At which "Bush" Harper laughed. "I'll attend to that all right," he said.

And the other replied, "It's a go, then; I'm your man." So Jurgis went out to the stockyards again, and was introduced to the political lord of the district, the boss of Chicago's mayor. It was Scully who owned the brickyards and the dump and the ice pond—though Jurgis did not know it. It was Scully who was to blame for the unpaved street in which Jurgis's child had been drowned; it was Scully who had put into office the magistrate who had first sent Jurgis to jail; it was Scully who was principal stockholder in the company which had sold him the ramshackle tenement, and then robbed him of it. But Jurgis knew none of these things—any more than he knew that Scully was but a tool and

puppet of the packers. To him Scully was a mighty power, the “biggest” man he had ever met.

He was a little, dried-up Irishman, whose hands shook. He had a brief talk with his visitor, watching him with his ratlike eyes, and making up his mind about him; and then he gave him a note to Mr. Harmon, one of the head managers of Durham’s—

“The bearer, Jurgis Rudkus, is a particular friend of mine, and I would like you to find him a good place, for important reasons. He was once indiscreet, but you will perhaps be so good as to overlook that.”

Mr. Harmon looked up inquiringly when he read this. “What does he mean by ‘indiscreet’?” he asked.

“I was blacklisted, sir,” said Jurgis.

At which the other frowned. “Blacklisted?” he said. “How do you mean?” And Jurgis turned red with embarrassment.

He had forgotten that a blacklist did not exist. “I—that is—I had difficulty in getting a place,” he stammered.

“What was the matter?”

“I got into a quarrel with a foreman—not my own boss, sir—and struck him.”

“I see,” said the other, and meditated for a few moments. “What do you wish to do?” he asked.

“Anything, sir,” said Jurgis—“only I had a broken arm this winter, and so I have to be careful.”

“How would it suit you to be a night watchman?”

“That wouldn’t do, sir. I have to be among the men at night.”

“I see—politics. Well, would it suit you to trim hogs?”

“Yes, sir,” said Jurgis.

And Mr. Harmon called a timekeeper and said, “Take this man to Pat Murphy and tell him to find room for him somehow.”

And so Jurgis marched into the hog-killing room, a place where, in the days gone by, he had come begging for a job. Now he walked jauntily, and smiled to himself, seeing the frown that came to the boss’s face as the timekeeper said, “Mr. Harmon says to put this man on.” It would overcrowd his department and spoil the record he was trying to make—but he said not a word except “All right.”

And so Jurgis became a workingman once more; and straightway he sought out his old friends, and joined the union, and began to “root” for “Scotty” Doyle. Doyle had done him a good turn once, he explained, and was really a bully chap; Doyle was a workingman himself, and would represent the workingmen—why did they want to vote for a millionaire “sheeny,” and what the hell had Mike Scully ever done for them that they should back his candidates all the time? And meantime Scully had given Jurgis a note to the Republican leader of the ward, and he had gone there and met the crowd he was to work with. Already they had hired a big hall, with some of the brewer’s money, and every night Jurgis brought in a dozen new members of the “Doyle Republican Association.” Pretty soon they had a grand opening night; and there was a brass band, which marched through the streets, and fireworks and bombs and red lights in front of the hall; and there was an enormous crowd, with two overflow meetings—so that the pale and trembling candidate had to recite three times over the little speech which one of

Scully's henchmen had written, and which he had been a month learning by heart. Best of all, the famous and eloquent Senator Spareshanks, presidential candidate, rode out in an automobile to discuss the sacred privileges of American citizenship, and protection and prosperity for the American workingman. His inspiring address was quoted to the extent of half a column in all the morning newspapers, which also said that it could be stated upon excellent authority that the unexpected popularity developed by Doyle, the Republican candidate for alderman, was giving great anxiety to Mr. Scully, the chairman of the Democratic City Committee.

The chairman was still more worried when the monster torchlight procession came off, with the members of the Doyle Republican Association all in red capes and hats, and free beer for every voter in the ward—the best beer ever given away in a political campaign, as the whole electorate testified. During this parade, and at innumerable cart-tail meetings as well, Jurgis labored tirelessly. He did not make any speeches—there were lawyers and other experts for that—but he helped to manage things; distributing notices and posting placards and bringing out the crowds; and when the show was on he attended to the fireworks and the beer. Thus in the course of the campaign he handled many hundreds of dollars of the Hebrew brewer's money, administering it with naive and touching fidelity. Toward the end, however, he learned that he was regarded with hatred by the rest of the “boys,” because he compelled them either to make a poorer showing than he or to do without their share of the pie. After that Jurgis did his best to please them, and to make up for the time he had lost before he discovered the extra bungholes of the campaign barrel.

He pleased Mike Scully, also. On election morning he was out at four o'clock, “getting out the vote”; he had a two-horse carriage to ride in, and he went from house to house for his friends, and escorted them in triumph to the polls. He voted half a dozen times himself, and voted some of his friends as often; he brought bunch after bunch of the newest

foreigners—Lithuanians, Poles, Bohemians, Slovaks—and when he had put them through the mill he turned them over to another man to take to the next polling place. When Jurgis first set out, the captain of the precinct gave him a hundred dollars, and three times in the course of the day he came for another hundred, and not more than twenty-five out of each lot got stuck in his own pocket. The balance all went for actual votes, and on a day of Democratic landslides they elected “Scotty” Doyle, the ex-tenpin setter, by nearly a thousand plurality—and beginning at five o’clock in the afternoon, and ending at three the next morning, Jurgis treated himself to a most unholy and horrible “jag.” Nearly every one else in Packingtown did the same, however, for there was universal exultation over this triumph of popular government, this crushing defeat of an arrogant plutocrat by the power of the common people.